

1 CLAIMS

2 1. A viewing management method for managing viewing of multiple
3 live electronic presentations, comprising:

4 simultaneously monitoring two or more electronic presentations that are
5 concurrently broadcast; and

6 automatically switching between displays of the two or more electronic
7 presentations based upon viewer-defined preferences.

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9 2. The viewing management method of claim 1, wherein the viewer-
10 defined preferences are defined in terms of specific electronic presentation titles.

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12 3. The viewing management method of claim 1, wherein the viewer-
13 defined preferences are defined in terms of topics that can occur within electronic
14 presentations.

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16 4. The viewing management method of claim 1, wherein the viewer-
17 defined preferences are defined in terms of events that can occur within electronic
18 presentations.

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20 5. The viewing management method of claim 1, wherein the viewer
21 defined preferences are defined in terms of at least one of:

22 specific electronic presentation titles;

23 topics that can occur within electronic presentations; and

24 events that can occur within electronic presentations.
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1 6. The viewing management method of claim 1, wherein the viewer-
2 defined preferences are defined in terms of priorities that can be assigned to the
3 two or more electronic presentations.

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5 7. The viewing management method of claim 1, wherein the viewer-
6 defined preferences are defined in terms of priorities that can be assigned to events
7 that can occur within the two or more electronic presentations.

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9 8. The viewing management method of claim 1, wherein said
10 automatically switching comprises enabling a picture-in-picture (PIP) display for
11 the viewer in which at least two of the electronic presentations are
12 contemporaneously displayed for the viewer.

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14 9. One or more computers programmed with instructions which, when
15 executed by the one or more computers, cause the one or more computers to
16 perform the method of claim 1.

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18 10. One or more computer-readable media having computer-readable
19 instructions thereon which, when executed by a computer, implement the method
20 of claim 1.

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22 11. A viewing management method for managing viewing of multiple
23 live electronic presentations, comprising:

24 simultaneously monitoring two or more electronic presentations that are
25 concurrently broadcast; and

1 automatically notifying a viewer when one or more of the electronic
2 presentations satisfies a viewer-defined preference.

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4 **12.** The viewing method of claim 11, wherein the viewer-defined
5 preferences are defined in terms of specific electronic presentation titles.

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7 **13.** The viewing method of claim 11, wherein the viewer-defined
8 preferences are defined in terms of topics that can occur within electronic
9 presentations.

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11 **14.** The viewing method of claim 11, wherein the viewer-defined
12 preferences are defined in terms of events that can occur within electronic
13 presentations.

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15 **15.** The viewing method of claim 11, wherein the viewer-defined
16 preferences are defined in terms of at least one of:
17 specific electronic presentation titles;
18 topics that can occur within electronic presentations; and
19 events that can occur within electronic presentations.

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21 **16.** The viewing method of claim 11, wherein the viewer-defined
22 preferences are defined in terms of priorities that can be assigned to the two or
23 more electronic presentations.

1 17. The viewing method of claim 11, wherein the viewer-defined
2 preferences are defined in terms of priorities that can be assigned to events that
3 can occur within the two or more electronic presentations.

4
5 18. The viewing method of claim 11, wherein said automatically
6 notifying comprises enabling a picture-in-picture (PIP) display for the viewer in
7 which at least two of the electronic presentations are contemporaneously displayed
8 for the viewer.

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10 19. One or more computers programmed with instructions which, when
11 executed by the one or more computers, cause the one or more computers to
12 perform the method of claim 11.

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14 20. One or more programmable computers having instructions which,
15 when executed by the one or more computers implement a viewing management
16 method for managing viewing of multiple live electronic presentations
17 comprising:

18 sending at least one viewer request to an encoder, the viewer request
19 containing one or more viewer-defined preferences that relate to one or more
20 events that can occur in one or more electronic presentations;

21 evaluating, with the encoder, one or more electronic presentations that are
22 being broadcast to determine whether any of the viewer-defined preferences are
23 satisfied; and
24
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1 if a viewer-defined preference is satisfied by one or more of the electronic
2 presentations, notifying a viewer that is associated with the viewer-defined
3 preference that was satisfied.
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5 **21.** The one or more programmable computers of claim 20, wherein said
6 notifying comprises automatically displaying the electronic presentation that
7 satisfied the viewer-defined preference.
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9 **22.** The one or more programmable computers of claim 20, wherein said
10 notifying comprises displaying indicia for the viewer that is associated with the
11 viewer-defined preference that was satisfied.
12

13 **23.** The one or more programmable computers of claim 20, wherein said
14 viewing management method further comprises prior to said sending:

15 receiving viewer requests with a server, the viewer requests originating
16 from a plurality of different viewers; and

17 maintaining at least a list of viewers and their viewer-defined preferences in
18 the server,

19 said sending comprising sending the viewer requests from the server to the
20 encoder.
21

22 **24.** The one or more programmable computers of claim 23, wherein said
23 notifying comprises:

24 sending a notification from the encoder to the server;

25 receiving the notification sent from the encoder; and

1 sending a notification from the server to the viewer.
2

3 **25.** A viewing management method for managing viewing of multiple
4 live electronic presentations, comprising:

5 receiving one or more viewer requests from one or more viewers, the
6 viewer requests containing viewer-defined preferences that are to be used to
7 evaluate a plurality of different live electronic presentations;

8 evaluating a plurality of live electronic presentations using the viewer-
9 defined preferences; and

10 in the event that one or more of the viewer-defined preferences is satisfied,
11 notifying at least one viewer that is associated with the viewer-defined preference
12 that is satisfied.
13

14 **26.** The viewing management method of claim 25, wherein said
15 notifying comprises automatically displaying the electronic presentation that is
16 associated with the viewer-defined preference that is satisfied.
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18 **27.** The viewing management method of claim 25, wherein said
19 notifying comprises displaying indicia of the electronic presentation that is
20 associated with the viewer-defined preference that is satisfied.
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1 **28.** The viewing management method of claim 25, wherein said
2 notifying comprises enabling a picture-in-picture (PIP) display for a viewer in
3 which at least two electronic presentations are contemporaneously displayed for
4 the viewer, one of the electronic presentations comprising one which is associated
5 with the viewer-defined preference that is satisfied.

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7 **29.** The viewing management method of claim 25, wherein said
8 receiving is performed by a server that is programmed to receive the viewer
9 requests and notify the viewers.

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11 **30.** The viewing management method of claim 25, wherein said
12 receiving is performed by a server that is programmed to receive the viewer
13 requests, evaluate the live electronic presentations, and notify the viewers.

14
15 **31.** The viewing management method of claim 25, wherein said
16 evaluating comprises:

17 receiving information describing the electronic presentations as they are
18 being broadcast;

19 receiving updated information describing the electronic presentations as
20 they are being broadcast; and

21 evaluating all of the information that is received in light of the viewer-
22 defined preferences.

1 **32.** One or more computers programmed with instructions which, when
2 executed by the one or more computers, cause the one or more computers to
3 implement the method of claim 25.

4
5 **33.** One or more computer-readable media having computer-readable
6 instructions thereon which, when executed by a computer, implement the method
7 of claim 25.

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9 **34.** A viewing management method for managing viewing of multiple
10 live electronic presentations, comprising:

11 creating a viewer request that contains one or more viewer-defined
12 preferences for use in evaluating one or more live electronic presentations;

13 sending the viewer request to one or more computing devices; and

14 evaluating one or more electronic presentations with the one or more
15 computing devices in light of the one or more viewer-defined preferences.

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17 **35.** The viewing management method of claim 34 further comprising
18 using the one or more computing devices to send a notification to a viewer in the
19 event that one or more of the electronic presentations satisfies one or more of the
20 viewer-defined preferences.

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22 **36.** The viewing management method of claim 34 further comprising
23 automatically displaying an electronic presentation for a viewer in the event that
24 the electronic presentation satisfies one or more of the viewer-defined preferences.
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1 **37.** The viewing management method of claim 34, wherein the viewer-
2 defined preferences are defined in terms of specific electronic presentation titles.

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4 **38.** The viewing management method of claim 34, wherein the viewer-
5 defined preferences are defined in terms of events that can occur in electronic
6 presentations.

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8 **39.** The viewing management method of claim 34, wherein the viewer-
9 defined preferences are defined in terms of topics that can occur in electronic
10 presentations.

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12 **40.** One or more computer-readable media having computer-readable
13 instructions thereon which, when executed by a computer, implement the method
14 of claim 34.

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16 **41.** An interactive network comprising:
17 one or more client viewing devices; and
18 one or more computing devices communicatively linked with the one or
19 more client viewing devices, the computing devices being programmed to:
20 simultaneously monitor one or more electronic presentations that are
21 concurrently broadcast; and
22 automatically send a notification to one or more of the client viewing
23 devices when one or more of the electronic presentations satisfies one or more
24 viewer-defined preference that is defined by a viewer of the one or more client
25 viewing devices.

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2 **42.** The interactive network of claim 41, wherein the one or more client
3 viewing devices are programmed to automatically display at least an indicia of an
4 electronic presentation that satisfies one or more of the viewer-defined preferences
5 upon receiving a notification from the one or more computing devices.
6

7 **43.** The interactive network of claim 42, wherein said indicia comprises
8 a display of the live electronic presentation.
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10 **44.** A viewing management method for managing viewing of multiple
11 live electronic presentations, comprising:

12 monitoring viewing habits of one or more viewers of live electronic
13 presentations to determine particular events within the electronic presentations that
14 the viewers are likely to want view; and

15 based upon monitored viewing habits, notifying one or more viewers when
16 it appears that an event is occurring within an electronic presentation that the
17 viewer is not viewing but would likely want to view.
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19 **45.** The viewing management method of claim 44, wherein said
20 notifying comprises automatically displaying the event for a viewer.
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22 **46.** The viewing management method of claim 44, wherein said
23 notifying comprises automatically displaying indicia of the electronic presentation,
24 but not the electronic presentation for a viewer.
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1 47. The viewing management method of claim 44, wherein said
2 notifying comprises automatically displaying the event in a picture-in-picture
3 (PIP) window on a viewer device.

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5 48. The viewing management method of claim 44, wherein said
6 monitoring comprises establishing a correlation between the time that a viewer
7 views a particular electronic presentation and the events that transpire during that
8 time.

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10 49. The viewing management method of claim 48, wherein said
11 establishing comprises evaluating viewer habits over a plurality of time frames
12 during which the viewer is viewing one or more electronic presentations.

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14 50. One or more computers programmed with instructions which, when
15 executed by the one or more computers, cause the one or more computers to
16 perform the method of claim 44.

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18 51. One or more computer-readable media having computer-readable
19 instructions thereon which, when executed by a computer, implement the method
20 of claim 44.

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22 52. An interactive network comprising:
23 one or more client viewing devices; and
24 one or more computing devices communicatively linked with the one or
25 more client viewing devices, the computing devices being programmed to:

1 monitor viewing habits of one or more viewers of live electronic
2 presentations to determine particular events within the electronic
3 presentations that the viewers are likely to want view; and

4 based upon monitored viewing habits, notify one or more viewers
5 when it appears that an event is occurring within an electronic presentation
6 that the viewer is not viewing but would likely want to view.

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8 **53.** The interactive network of claim 52, wherein at least one of the
9 client viewing devices comprises a television.

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11 **54.** The interactive network of claim 52, wherein at least one of the
12 client viewing devices comprises a computer display.

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14 **55.** A user interface for use in an interactive entertainment system
15 comprising:

16 a processor;

17 an application executing on the processor and configured to present
18 plurality of fields, one of which displaying a number of titles of programs that can
19 be selected by a viewer, another of which displaying indicia that can be selected to
20 define viewer preferences for simultaneously monitoring two or more of the
21 programs that are selected by the viewer; and

22 an input device operable to enable a user to select a particular electronic
23 presentation for continuous play viewing.

1 **56.** The user interface of claim 55, wherein said indicia is associated
2 with predefined aspects of the programs.

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4 **57.** The user interface of claim 55, wherein said indicia is associated
5 with viewer-definable aspects of the programs.
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